

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Briefing of Dr. Kissinger by General Pauly  
and Colonel Carlson of the Joint Staff

DATE: June 8, 1972

PARTICIPANTS: General Pauly  
Colonel Carlson  
Dr. Kissinger  
General Haig  
Captain McKee  
Commander Howe

General Pauly: In naval gun fire support three destroyers fired 85 rounds at five watercraft. All five were damaged, two went ashore and three remained dead in the water. Turning to air activity over North Vietnam, on June 7 BDA indicates that the attacks in the Buffer Zone along the Lang Giai railroad bridges resulted in the destruction of one bridge. There were near misses on the other bridges.

Dr. Kissinger: By near misses you mean you missed altogether.

General Pauly: Yes, that is correct. There was some cratering near one bridge and another appeared to be camouflaged with trees. This is something we have not experienced before but with the one bridge that was knocked out both the main bridge and the bypass bridge are now damaged and inoperable.

Dr. Kissinger: How about Hanoi?

General Pauly: We did get in there last night but the night before (i. e. June 7) the effort was concentrated on the bridges in the Buffer Zone.

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Dr. Kissinger:

Well, what did you hit last night?

General Pauly:

In the Hanoi area aircraft hit the barracks and supply area resulting in 8 buildings destroyed including one large explosion and one large fire. They also hit the mortar vehicle maintenance and storage area but no BDA was reported.

Dr. Kissinger:

What about the Paul Darnier bridge?

General Pauly:

It was not struck but it is still down. I believe there are three spans on the railroad bridge and two on the highway bridge that are still down. Two off-shore islands were struck and there were 30 WBLCs and twelve barges damaged. The Hon Gay ferry was hit resulting in one large explosion and two bridges in the Nhi Binh area were struck.

It appears that the enemy is beginning to move their SAM battalions to the north. Also the GCI site in the Vinh area has been torn down. Two air fields in southern North Vietnam which have been struck appear not to be being used. There is no apparent effort to repair them. Overall it seems that the air defense effort is reoriented to the north.

The submarine picture is much the same. Contact was broken with the E-2 class submarine which was being trailed by the Guard Fish. The two submarines apparently discovered each other and it was decided not to continue trailing.

In B-52 activity 21 aircraft made strikes and just above the DMZ area. There were also 18 sorties in MR-1, 36 in MR-2, four in MR-4 and six in Cambodia. There were none in MR-3. In tactical air activity there were 673 tactical air strikes with 167 in MR-1, 121 in MR-2, 104 in MR-3, 28 in MR-4 and a total of 253 over North Vietnam. There were also 172 VNAF sorties. A total of 1,300 sorties of all types are scheduled for tomorrow.

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The situation in MR-1 is basically stable. The South Vietnamese marines have begun a spoiling operation involving five battalions. Thus far 55 of the enemy have been KIA and 15 weapons and one 120 mm mortar captured. First Division units have been able to move three miles south of Fire Support Base Checkmate and Airborne units have moved out seven miles to the West beyond the defense line where they have made some contact. Naval gun fire support in MR-1 has been provided by nine destroyers.

In MR-2 the clearing operation around Kontum continue. Friendly forces now in the entire town. MACV estimates that during the recent fighting there were 2,600 enemy casualties. One report indicates that the 28th enemy regiment is down to as few as 100 men and some enemy companies have been completely disbanded. It is hoped that Kontum airfield will be in operation in another 24 hours. In the Quin Hon area sappers blew up a bridge and there was a contact outside the town.

In MR-3 it was reported at 5:15 this morning that a link up between the relieving forces and those in An Loc had occurred.

Dr. Kissinger:

Did the 5th Division move south from An Loc? (laughter)

General Pauly:

To a certain extent that is correct. The Airborne units accomplished the link up by moving from An Loc south to the area where an airborne unit was recently inserted.

Dr. Kissinger:

Together with leading figures on the Vietnam budget situation we ought to get this information about the link up out.

General Pauly:

I want to caution that this information is tenuous and I will want to check it further to substantiate it but we will get it out if it is correct.

In MR-4 there was one small contact in which 15 of the enemy were KIA. Otherwise it was quiet.

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Dr. Kissinger:

It would appear to me that the two worst mistakes the North Vietnamese have made have been first, surrounding An Loc and second, closing Kontum pass so there was no way the ARVN could fall back.

Attached at Tab A are the notes used by the briefers.

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